

City of Frankfort, Kentucky

Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan



Prepared for:

City of Frankfort, Kentucky



Prepared by:

Jordan, Jones & Goulding, Inc.



In association with:

The Corradino Group, Inc.

Human Nature, Inc.

Kriss Lowry & Associates, Inc.

Plangraphics

Executive Summary

Project Overview

The City of Frankfort is engaged in a redevelopment process for the Holmes Street corridor. Holmes Street is a two-lane state facility (State Route 2261) that travels from High Street in downtown generally to the east on a route as shown in Figure 1-1. Holmes Street travels through a developed corridor with a variety of residential and commercial activity. The overriding goal of the planning process is to create an “Environment for Development” that will lead to more home ownership, fewer vacant structures, and improved infrastructure and neighborhood level amenities.

Effectively, the Holmes Street corridor serves as the “back entry” to downtown Frankfort from the east and north. Approximately 2 miles in length, it serves as a centerline in a small valley prone to flooding and bounded by steep ridges. The neighborhood is extremely diverse; with the housing and commercial building stock highly variable. The economics of the Holmes Street Corridor, encompassing 800 to 1000 acres, is equally diverse, supporting both service and commercial enterprises as well as mix of owner and renter occupied housing. The state government is a major landowner in the valley floor and, until the recently, Frankfort Scrap Metal anchored the southern end of Holmes Street.

Because of this diversity, Holmes Street has represented a conundrum for the City; it is an area of disinvestment while some have invested in residential, commercial and service businesses. It is an area subject to significant storm water runoff problems while its geography includes areas that are “high and dry.” There is significant potential – large tracts of land that are underutilized and, until the Holmes Street Task Force was created, there were no comprehensive plans existing that treated the corridor holistically.

In the Spring of 2000, representatives of the Frankfort business community approached state, city and county government officials with an idea of establishing a Holmes Street Redevelopment Corporation modeled after the Louisville Waterfront Development Authority. Though the proposal failed to gain local support particularly among the residents of the corridor, it did coalesce a Neighborhood Association that became active and vocal about the future of the area. Over the past several years, the Neighborhood Association in conjunction with the City and the University of Kentucky has undertaken preliminary visioning of potential futures for the Corridor. A more formal and comprehensive analysis and planning effort for the Holmes Street corridor was the logical next step.

The following objectives were established for this study.

1. Enhancing the physical appearance of the corridor.
2. Building consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals that have a role in the revitalization process.
3. Strengthening the corridor’s existing economic base.

To develop a master plan to achieve those objectives, a consulting team led by Jordan, Jones & Goulding, Inc. was retained by the City to develop this master plan. The plan involved working with city staff and residents of Holmes Street and encompassed the following tasks:

Task 1: Work with Stakeholders

Task 2: Conduct Research and Technical Studies

Task 3: Identify and Evaluate Conceptual Alternative Solutions

Task 4: Recommend Design Concept and Scope

The public involvement process referenced above included the following:

- A general community meeting on May 18, 2006 to introduce the plan to the community.
- A meeting on November 20, 2006 to introduce the project alternatives and concepts and to get input with the plan.
- A presentation on January 11, 2007 to the City Commission and the public about the final recommendation of the plan.

This Executive Summary documents the planning process from May 2006 through January 2007 that resulted in the Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan. The following sections provide a brief summary of each major work category. Detailed information on each is included in the full final report.

Future Land Use Plan

The final recommended land use plan for the neighborhood as defined through the study process calls for emphasizing redevelopment throughout the neighborhood with an emphasis on a mix of public and private investment.

Key first steps in realizing the plan are:

- Code enforcement – residential rental, residential owner, and industrial;
- Coordinate capital improvement projects to maximize benefit to the neighborhood;
- Zoning enforcement;
- Neighborhood cleanup program;
- Housing redevelopment;
- Infill housing development associated with the Greenway;
- Establishment of a redevelopment corporation to focus future incentive programs for private investment in the corridor; and,
- Getting a political champion to help get projects funded.

Transportation Recommendations

A major purpose of the study was to recommend a preferred roadway section for Holmes Street. The transportation analysis for this effort is documented in the full project report. The key issue was whether the roadway should be a five-lane facility, which had been identified in previous analyses of the corridor.

In examining the conditions on Holmes Street and viewing them within the goals and objectives of this study, a three-lane roadway is recommended for the following reasons:

- A three-lane facility can be pedestrian friendly and compliments the neighborhood.
- Moderate levels of congestion will control speeds
- Slower speeds are better for neighborhood commercial developments
- Excess purchased right-of-way can be used for bike/pedestrian facilities, off-street parking, gateway and streetscape features, utilities, etc.
- More conducive of a residential area

The disadvantages of a five-lane Holmes Street are:

- Pedestrian barrier
- Travel speeds would exceed the current 35 mph speed limit and would require constant enforcement
- Typical of a major arterial route, not a neighborhood corridor

Housing Recommendations

As part of the redevelopment master plan, an inventory of housing in the area was conducted by Kriss Lowrey and Associates. The purpose of the housing inventory was to document the condition of housing to support long-term planning recommendations and to identify any cultural/historical issues that may arise during redevelopment efforts.

Prior to using any Federal funds for housing redevelopment activities within the Holmes Street Redevelopment Area, an environmental assessment of the proposed project must be completed. One component of the environmental assessment is a determination of the impact of the project on any properties on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. After a review of the information obtained during the housing inventory, the Kentucky Heritage Council has made a preliminary determination that this area has potential to be eligible as a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) district. Additionally, there may be specific buildings, sites, structures or objects eligible for individual NRHP listing. As such, the Kentucky Heritage Council has requested that a cultural assessment of the area be conducted.

It is recommended that the cultural assessment be conducted as soon as possible, so that future projects will not be delayed and so the findings can be considered when finalizing redevelopment plans for the area. If a portion of the area is an eligible NRHP district, a mitigation plan will need to be developed. This may include requirements such as Kentucky Heritage Council review of Federally funded renovation work, the development of architecturally compatible house plans for new or reconstructed houses, or the implementation

of zoning design guidelines for the area. Any house plans developed should also meet Kentucky Housing Corporation's minimum design standards and universal design standards.

Storm Water/Sanitary Sewers

The sanitary sewers in the Holmes Street area are a combined system. This means that both storm water runoff and wastewater from homes and businesses are carried by the same sewer service lines to the wastewater treatment plant, resulting in system overflows during rain events. Current state and Federal regulations require separate systems for the handling of storm water runoff and wastewater. The City of Frankfort Sewer Department is addressing this problem and has developed a Long-Term Control Plan for its Combined Sewer System (CSO). Under this plan, the City of Frankfort is pursuing funding for a neighborhood sewer improvement project for the Holmes Street area which will separate selected sanitary sewer lines from the storm water collection system. This will improve both the sanitary sewer collection system and storm water drainage in the neighborhood. As part of the Holmes Street Redevelopment Plan, recommendations for conducting the storm water/sewer project with housing and roadway projects are included in the full study report.

Implementation

The planning process for the Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan has involved two planning efforts, public input and commitment and funds from the City. The plan answers the key question raised by the neighborhood during the planning process: what is going to happen to my house? The answer is there is not going to be a massive buyout or relocation program. Rather, the emphasis is on improving the appearance of the neighborhood, improving the quality and the appearance of housing stock that is not in good condition (i.e., there are few structures that require complete demolition), and building the neighborhood's image as a good and desirable place to live. Keys to that will be the infrastructure improvement projects, accompanied by strategic redevelopment projects in key locations along the corridor.

The Final Land Use Master Plan developed for the study is shown in Figure ES-1. The streetscape concepts that could be implemented to support the plan are shown in Figure ES-2. Table ES-1 presents the defined recommendations for the plan. Of these, the following are considered critical:

- Dialog with the State on Highway project;
- Dialog with the State on use of their property;
- Combine streetscape into sewer project; and,
- Conduct cultural resources assessment.

These initial four recommendations should be initiated immediately so that the information developed and the conclusion relative to the neighborhood can be incorporated into the initial capital improvement projects in the Holmes Street area.

Figure ES-1



Figure ES-2

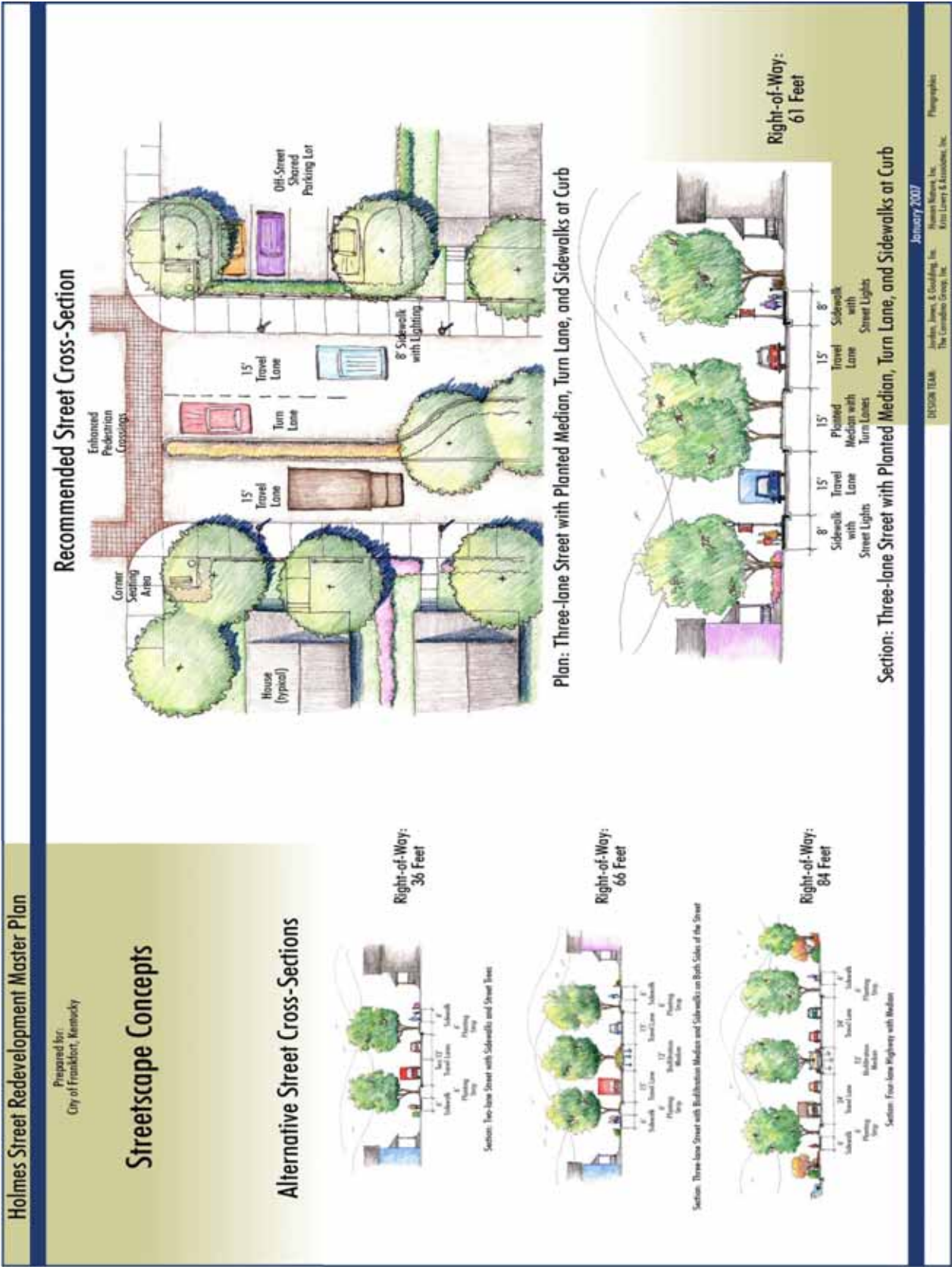


Table ES-1

Holmes Street Redevelopment Master Plan	
<p>Prepared for: City of Frankfort, Kentucky</p> <p>Master Plan Recommendations</p>	
<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate storm sewers and sanitary sewers using CDBG and other funding sources. • Use 2007 HOME funds for a Scattered Site Homeowner Rehabilitation program. Target funds in Area A first and then Area B. Require sewer service lines to be replaced when a house is renovated or reconstructed. • Once CDBG funds are available after completion of the sewer work, pursue CDBG funds for Neighborhood Redevelopment projects to acquire vacant properties and substandard rental properties. Consolidate acquired land to create lots which meet or exceed current zoning standards. Larger lots will allow increased setbacks, off street parking and room to grade sites for proper drainage away from the house. Reducing overall densities will allow less lot coverage and increase permeable area for better drainage which will help reduce flooding problems. • Use HOME funds, bank funds and Rural Development loans to assist renters in becoming homeowners and reconstructing new homes on the lots created with CDBG funds. Work with Community Ventures Corporation or other CHDO's to provide homeownership counseling and construction financing for renters who wish to become homeowners. • Construct curbs, gutters and sidewalks in redeveloped areas. Start housing redevelopment in Area A, then proceed to Area B, C and then E. Houses in Area D should be acquired and demolished and the area should be converted to greenspace. • Develop house plans which meet KHC's minimum design standards and universal design standards that are architecturally compatible with surrounding houses. • Work with local banks to offer a low interest loan program to owners who wish to improve rental or owner occupied structures themselves. • Use code enforcement to require properties to be maintained in accordance with the International Property Maintenance Code. • Work with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to determine footprint of future street improvements. Do not use housing funds to renovate or reconstruct homes in areas which conflict with future street improvements. 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Resource Assessment. • Dialog with State regarding future of State owned Holmes Street property. • Establish a "Holmes Street Redevelopment District". • Establish "Holmes Street Redevelopment District Zoning/Design Overlay". • As part of the Zoning/Design Overlay, create a Holmes Street code enforcement program. <p>Streetscape, Open Space, & Redevelopment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate streetscape improvements into sewer project. • Dialog with Bluegrass ADD and KYTC on Holmes Street improvements (3 vs. 5 lanes, access control). • Develop an access control plan for Holmes Street. • Create off street parking areas thru the purchase of abandoned and/or substandard buildings. • Provide curbs, sidewalks, street trees, and a landscaped median (with turn lanes at strategic intersections and driveways) along Holmes Street. • Provide safe and well-marked pedestrian crossings at all intersections. • Provide pedestrian-scale lighting along the street. • Establish a gateway sign and/or feature near the Bypass that welcomes visitors to Frankfort and the Holmes Street neighborhood. • Create an open space zone in the middle of the Holmes Street corridor for civic events and passive/active recreation that serves the neighborhood. This area would be an ideal place for a future aquatic or recreation center. • Set aside the bottomland along the creek/ditch near Rouse Avenue for stormwater mitigation. This area could be used for wetland banking and flood control. Side benefits include a bike trail, ecological habitats, and educational opportunities. • Create a bike trail that provides a safe connection from the northern edge of the Holmes Street neighborhood to downtown Frankfort. • Establish a Mixed-Use redevelopment zone near downtown to serve the neighborhood and energize the edge of downtown.
<p>DESIGN TEAM: Jackson, Jones, & Goulding, Inc. The Creative Group, Inc.</p> <p>January 2007</p> <p>Planners: Plummer Williams, Inc. Kraus Lerner & Associates, Inc.</p>	